

Wegovy users have less kidney-related health problems, analysis of Novo study finds

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By Maggie Fick

London: Novo Nordisk's Wegovy obesity drug reduced adverse kidney-related events by 22 per cent in overweight and obese people in a large study, according to a new analysis the Danish

drugmaker published on Saturday.

The analysis, from a large study for which substantial results had been released by Novo last year, was presented at the European Renal Congress in Stockholm.

"By addressing key markers of kidney health, semaglutide... may contribute to a significant reduction in the risk of kidney-related complications, including chronic kidney disease and end-stage renal disease," said Professor Helen M. Colhoun of the University of Edinburgh and lead study author.

A Novo spokesperson said in a statement to Reuters that the new analysis "demonstrates for the first time the benefits of semaglutide 2.4 mg in improving kidney function in people with cardiovascular disease and overweight or obesity, without diabetes, a high-risk population with increased need for kidney protection."

The study follows the publication in March of a Novo study showing its diabetes drug Ozempic delayed progression of chronic kidney disease in diabetes patients. Ozempic contains the same active ingredient, semaglutide, as Wegovy, which is approved as an obesity treatment.

The latest data adds to growing body of medical evidence that drugs from the GLP-1 class, which suppress appetite by mimicking gut hormones, have medical benefits for conditions beyond type 2 diabetes and weight loss, their initial purposes.

In the new analysis, semaglutide led to a slower decline in a certain measure of kidney function known as eGFR (estimated glomerular filtration rate), particularly in individuals with a pre-existing kidney impairment.

There was also a significant reduction in the urinary albumin-to-creatinine ratio (UACR), another important marker of kidney health, the analysis found.

Regardless of kidney function at the start of the study, "no increased risk of acute kidney injury was associated with semaglutide", it found.

The analysis examined data from a large trial by Novo Nordisk called Select. Initial results from that were published in August.

The 17,604-patient trial tested Wegovy not for weight loss or kidney function but for its heart protective benefits for overweight and obese patients who had preexisting heart disease but not diabetes.

The analysis published on Saturday comes a day after Novo presented detailed results of a separate late-stage trial showing its diabetes drug Ozempic slowed the worsening of kidney dysfunction in patients with type 2 diabetes and lowered the risk of kidney failure, heart problems, stroke and death.

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